

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## 2SSB 5235

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### As Reported By House Committee On:

Law & Justice  
Appropriations

**Title:** An act relating to superior court judges.

**Brief Description:** Adding a superior court judge in Clark county.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Bauer, Sutherland, Palmer and Smith).

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Law & Justice: 3/24/95, 3/31/95 [DP];

Appropriations: 4/3/95 [DP].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Sheahan, Chairman; Delvin, Vice Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Appelwick, Ranking Minority Member; Costa, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Carrell; Chappell; Cody; Lambert; McMahan; Morris; Smith; Thibaudeau and Veloria.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Robertson.

**Staff:** Pat Shelledy (786-7149).

**Background:** The Legislature determines the number of superior court judges in each county. Clark County currently has six superior court judges. The Washington State Constitution provides that the state must pay half of the salary of each superior court judge, and the county pays the other half. The county also pays for costs associated with the position such as capital costs and staff support costs.

**Summary of Bill:** An additional superior court judge position is authorized for Clark County, increasing the number of superior court judges in Clark County from six to seven. The position is effective only if the Clark County legislative authority approves the position and agrees to pay the county's share of the expenses.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Clark County is the fastest growing county, and the judges have the heaviest caseload in the state. The commissioners support the additional judge, and the weighted caseload analysis has been completed.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Chuck Foster, Board of Judicial Administration, Office of the Administrator for the Courts, and Superior Court Judges Association (pro); and Judge Tom Lodge, Clark County Superior Court (pro).

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## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 30 members: Representatives Silver, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Huff, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Brumsickle; Carlson; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; Dellwo; G. Fisher; Foreman; Grant; Hargrove; Hickel; Jacobsen; Lambert; Lisk; McMorris; Poulsen; Reams; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott; Thibaudeau and Wolfe.

**Staff:** John Woolley (786-7154).

**Summary of Recommendation of Committee on Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee on Law & Justice:** No new changes were recommended.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** The bill is supported as there is an urgent need for an additional judge in Clark County.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Senator Albert Bauer, prime sponsor.